

Freedom Day Parade

On June 26, Sha'ar Zahav will be marching, singing, and dancing down Market Street in this year's Lesbian and Gay Freedom Day Parade. The parade route has been changed: it will begin in the Castro and march down to the Civic Center. Please watch the Friday night announcement sheets or call the synagogue office the week before the parade for our exact meeting place. And when you see our banner coming down the street, jump in and march with us! CSZ T-shirts and sweat shirts are the recommended attire; the CSZ boutique is open during regular office hours. CSZ will observe "Freedom Shabbat" on Friday, June 24.

A Day in the Life of Israel

What is life like in Israel today? How do Jews and Arabs live together and interact in their daily lives? Drawing upon the experiences and observations of Sha'ar Zahav members who have lived in Israel, we will be starting an informal discussion group about Israel and the issues it presents. Among the topics we hope to cover are:

- the current Palestinian Arab uprising
- the history of Zionism, the Arab-Jewish Conflict, and the land of Israel
- gay life in Israel
- the relationship of American Jews to Israel

If you are interested and would like to join us, please call either Gail Friedlander (824-4138) or Ron Lezell (824-4449).

Our first meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 16, at 7:30 pm in the Oneg Room.

A second meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 14, at 6:30 pm upstairs.

Out of Our Kitchen Closets Into the Food Bank



Following a recent service, synagogue and cookbook project leaders presented a check for \$7,000 to the SF AIDS Foundation Food Bank. Pictured here are (l. to r.) Tim Wolfred, executive director of the AIDS Foundation; Cary Norsworthy, media coordinator of the Food Bank; Ron Moskowitz, cookbook editor; Rabbi Yoel Kahn; Susan Unger, cookbook project coordinator; and CSZ President Richard Inlander.

Photo by Steve Savage.

Taste the Strudel

The following is a condensed version of a sermon delivered at CSZ on April 29 by Rabbi Janet Ross Marder of Beth Chayim Chadashim, our sibling congregation in Los Angeles.

I had thought of speaking to you tonight about some of the things I've learned as rabbi of Beth Chayim Chadashim for the past five years. But I decided to tell you instead about one of my failures. It has a lot to do with the name of this week's Torah portion: *Acharei Mot—After the Death*. Our portion begins like this: "God spoke to Moses after the death of Aaron's two sons" (Lev. 16:1). You probably know the

story. Two young men, leaders in the community, die suddenly, under mysterious circumstances, in a not very pretty way.

The story began to get to me, somehow, once I'd been working at BCC for a while, as I watched so many young men, full of promise, full of talent, dying in sudden, mysterious, not very pretty ways. And gradually I realized that, for reasons beyond my control, the theme of my rabbinate was becoming *Acharei Mot—After the Death*.

I found myself doing the same thing over and over again: Meeting someone. Getting to know him. Getting attached

Continued on page 4

Are We the Shul with AIDS?

The following column is adapted from Rabbi Kahn's shabbat sermon on March 11. The concluding section appears below; the first half was printed in last month's Forward.

What happens when we talk about AIDS and the AIDS crisis with each other? At times we refuse to hear, turning away from one another's rage, grief or pain. Some of us close ourselves off to others by replacing active *listening* with active *lobbying*—lobbying for our own personal priorities, whatever they are. In recent months, we have heard an increasingly cacophonous chorus of advice-givers and directives about how best to promote our health. Some people advocate getting tested now if you have not yet done so, and, if your blood is antibody positive, having a count of T-cells. Depending on the results, one is advised to start a regimen of antivirals and/or immune enhancers. Other people have begun taking AZT and believe that just about everyone else should too. A variety of other therapies and regimens are being promoted by their partisans in the community.

It is critically important that the greatest possible range of drugs and therapies be available to those who need them. In light of the known toxicity of AZT, the only licensed drug currently available, increasing the speed of approval and the accessibility of other promising treatments must be a priority. On the other hand, we can do great harm by insisting on a particular treatment as the treatment of choice. Along with the vast gains in scientific understanding since the epidemic began, we have painfully learned how much we do *not* know. No one can speak with certitude about AIDS or its proper treatment.

For a person confronting a life-threatening illness, what can be more difficult than making a decision whose consequences might save one's own life? Is it right to add to this burden by informing others that the decision they have made is "wrong," because it is not the decision we would make? This is a challenge we all face: we must learn to accept those we love, and support them and the deci-

sions they make—even when we disagree.

Jim Geary, of Shanti, talked about the meaning of unconditional love. Unconditional love, he explained, is not holding someone's hand, staring deeply, and saying, "I love you. God loves you." Unconditional love is accepting one another. That means accepting one another with all our faults, our grief and our denial. It means accepting decisions we would not make ourselves. It is being able to say with sincerity: "I am here for you. *Hineni*."

We learn in the Mishnah, in *Pirkei Avot*, "Do not try to placate a friend in the first hour of anger, do not try to comfort in the first hour of grief." I am often reminded of this passage when, soon after a death, anxious friends inquire about a mourner: "How is she doing?" Well, often the answer is "lousy!" Our tradition teaches that the proper behavior at *shiva* or other condolence visits is to begin in silence. We express comfort through our presence—messengers of *Shechinah*, which means Presence—and do not try to fix or "make better" what is not in our control. If we accept that others are coping as best they are able—with grief, or illness, or pain—then we can let go of the expectation that they will act exactly as we want them to.

What can we do? We can listen. We can express love and support. We can stop being so polite all the time and express our anger and rage and even our despair. We can—and do—comfort with our loving and listening presence. We can dare to acknowledge the depth of the spiritual crisis of this hour, and create the words and rituals and forums where it can be explored and answered. Finally, we can resist the increasing tendency to divide our community, separating those who are "negative" from those who are "positive," those with ARC from those with AIDS. Instead of raising new barriers which will further separate us, let us build the bridges of connection and intimacy which will sustain us as individuals, a congregation and a community.

—Rabbi Yoel Kahn

Oneg Sponsors

During April onegs were sponsored by the following generous people:

- 15 Cheri Pies, in memory of her lover, Lynn Campbell
- 22 The Newsletter Committee, in appreciation of Alex Ingersoll's outstanding performance as editor of the *Jewish Gaily Forward*

All you have to do to sponsor an oneg is to think of the occasion and contact the synagogue office (861-6932). The cost of sponsoring a complete oneg is \$80 or, for partial sponsorship, \$50. You can also provide the food, flowers, etc. for a more personal touch.

The Jewish Gaily Forward is published 11 times annually by Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 220 Danvers at Caselli, San Francisco, California 94114, (415) 861-6932. Permission to reproduce non-copyrighted material is freely given, and credit would be appreciated.

Members of the Congregation receive the *Forward*. For a donation of \$12/year, non-members will receive the *Forward*.

All newsletter copy should be typed, double-spaced and is due no later than the date of the Va'ad meeting. It should be sent to the synagogue office, marked to the attention of the *Forward*. All material is subject to editing; material will not be returned.

Members of the Newsletter Committee are Alita Rosenfeld (Production Editor), Bob Goldware (Articles Coordinator), Howard Blechman, Stephanie Hannaford, Garry Koenigsberg, Henry Mach, David Shaber and David Stein (general editorial and production); Amy Blasenheim (photos); Frank Hyman, Alex Ingersoll, Sam Thal and Eli Weinstein (distribution). The *Forward* is typeset by David Lester, Pagesetter Typography and printed by Lou Greene.

Display Ads are \$15 per column inch for non-members and \$10 per column inch for members, with discounts available for size and frequency. Ads should be camera ready; any ads that require typesetting, camera and/or artwork will be subject to a one-time production charge.

Classified Ads are \$5 for up to 20 words, plus \$1 for each 10 additional words. No personals accepted.

Payment must accompany ad and should be sent to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 220 Danvers at Caselli, San Francisco, California 94114, marked attention *Forward* advertising. The advertising deadline is the second Monday of the month. The *Forward* reserves the right to reject any ad for reasons of taste.

Gays in Israel

Gay and bisexual women and men still face considerable social pressures in Israel, but growing numbers are deciding to live openly and to fight for human rights. This was one of the points made by speakers at a joint program on May 1, co-sponsored by CSZ and Ahavat Shalom to support the lesbian, gay, and bisexual communities in Israel.

Nicole Berner, Sha'ar Zahavnik Ron Lezell, and Ahavat Shalom member Danny Kent spoke about their recent experiences in Israel. According to Ron, who spent over a year living openly as a gay man, "Israel isn't San Francisco—but it may be like Kansas City." Danny and Nicole spoke of their intent to return to Israel this fall, as founding members of a new kibbutz that intends to include people of all sexual orientations and work for Jewish-Arab peace. The kibbutz movement has given its support to the project. Still, social constraints are often strong. Nicole, who worked for a program that brings Arab and Jewish youngsters together, noted that it was "unacceptable" for her to talk about being a lesbian.

Those attending the program filled three boxes to overflowing with books, records, and journals on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and feminist themes. These will be sent to two Israeli organizations with whom we are developing contacts—*Agudah* (Society for the Protection of Human Rights, a largely gay male organization), and *K'laf* (*Kehillah Lesbit Feminist*—Lesbian Feminist Community). Both organizations sponsor political, social, and cultural activities. The books will add considerably to their small libraries.

You can still donate books, records or tapes to our friends in Israel by bringing them to the synagogue office in the next month. The Social Action Committee, together with Ahavat Shalom, is planning follow-up activities. If you are interested in helping, let us know!

—Ami Zusman,
Social Action Committee

Carol Fiul, M.A.

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Neve Shalom: Oasis in the Storm

Neve Shalom lies halfway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Taking its name from a line in Isaiah: "My people shall live in an Oasis of Peace," Neve Shalom is dedicated to the proposition that Jews and Arabs can live together.

For the last 10 years, without such amenities as government-provided water, electricity, or paved access, 35 people have struggled to keep this community alive and true to its name.

Were this only an isolated experiment, a group of mad idealists willing to isolate themselves in the hills to prove a point, it would offer no threat to the fanatical closed-mindedness that afflicts every faction in that land. But these families produce not only almonds, honey and sheep: they also deal in changing teenagers' minds—a more insidious product! In pursuit of this goal, three times a year the community welcomes one group of 30 high school students from an Israeli (i.e., Jewish) school or kibbutz, and an equally large class from a high school in a neighboring Arab town. Though the two groups probably live only a few kilometers apart, chances are that this is their first social connection. No groups have yet been invited from the Occupied Territories, since Neve Shalom does not consider those areas to be part of Israel.

In the spring of 1983, when I first visited Neve Shalom, I watched the two high school groups arrive on the hillside, which was covered with wildflowers. Both groups immediately saw that this was no plush vacation resort. Through working hard and living together, Neve Shalom showed itself to be a fertile ground for fostering communication and interpersonal relationships. At first the two separate groups kept pretty much apart. It didn't take long, however, for natural curiosity and the effects of unusual proximity to take hold. Living, working and sharing together was inevitable.

The Neve Shalom program is simple and creative. First there are encounter games, facilitated by two adults (one Arab, one Jew) where the two groups share personal information, cultural commonalities and differences, fantasies, and stereotypes about "The Others." There are games, songs, and dances in both languages. After a few days of common meals and shared tasks, no one

is heard to say: "The Jews think this..." or "The Arabs do that..." Rather we hear, "Shimshon thinks..." and "Laviva says..."

Does it work? According to the kids, yes it does! They describe their experiences with the excitement of explorers of unknown territory. Over 1600 teenagers per year visit Neve Shalom, meeting their "enemies" as human beings.

After a visit to Neve Shalom, these are the images that stay in my memory: Four o'clock in the afternoon, two teachers at the kindergarten, one Arab, one Jew, closing up shop; several fathers enjoying an hour of peace with their children—quiet men taking care of noisy children; the growing friendship between Jewish and Arab teenagers; and the sound of Tsmardar's voice reminding me as I leave the settlement: "Don't call us a model! If you have to call us anything, call us an 'experiment in living' because we are living here."

Five years have passed. Tensions are high in the land. Distrust is rampant. I find myself wanting to tell people about Neve Shalom—telling everyone that Neve Shalom is a haven in the Land of Zion where the true spirit of Zionism has a chance to take root and blossom as the wildflowers on the hills in spring like an Oasis of Peace.

—Mark Freeman



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DESIGN CONSULTANTS

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to him. Watching him die. Giving his eulogy. And after his death, feeling helpless. Feeling angry. Feeling exhausted.

People would say to me all the time, "I don't know how you handle it." And I would shrug off their comments. But now I do know how I handled it: I failed. I got depressed. And I saw that I was not alone in my response; there were many in our community who were depressed—over AIDS, over the never-ending struggle against LaRouche initiatives, over homophobia, painful family situations, financial pressures. I saw people getting burned out, worn out, getting irritable. I realize now that we have been, for some time now, a depressed community.

"And God spoke to Moses after the death of Aaron's two sons." And so it occurs to me to ask: Where is the voice of God speaking to us after the death of our young men? How does the voice of Jewish tradition speak to us in our depression?

A couple of hundred years ago, the theme of melancholy became the life-work of the great Hasid Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav. "Depression, he wrote, "is a terrible scourge. It feeds the evil inclination ... The fundamental reason why people are far from God is because of depression."

For Nachman, sadness was not merely a psychological problem; it was a religiously dangerous state of being. And as I watched the impact of depression on myself, on individuals I cared about, on the community I served, I began to understand what Nachman meant.

Listen to the words of a father mourning the loss of his child—30 years after the event: "Even today I carry a death within myself, the death of my son, and I am like a decapitated pine. Pine trees do not regenerate their tops. They stay twisted, crippled. They grow in thickness, perhaps, and that is what I am doing."

A decapitated pine tree—twisted and crippled. No wonder Nachman called depression a scourge. The early Hasidim called it *katnut*—a state of smallness, in which the human soul is stunted and constricted. It happens to individuals, who become listless and withdrawn; it can happen to a community, which feels exhausted, numb, and turns in-

ward. So our sages taught that Jews must fight depression at all times, lest it destroy us.

And how do we fight depression? The answer our rabbis give seems ridiculously simple. They repeat three little words from the creation story; "*Ve-hineh tov me'od*. Behold, it is very good." Life, they insist, is good. This world is good. Despite what you see, despite what you think, there is incredible beauty to be found here.

When I listen for the voice of our tradition in this dark time, I hear it saying, "*Ivdu et Adonai be-simcha*—Serve God with joy" (Ps. 100:2). The true religious life is one that doesn't succumb to sadness, that looks for joy even in the midst of tragedy, that struggles to move from *katnut*—constriction of soul—to *gadlut*—greatness, expansiveness, openness of spirit.

The way I survive depression now is to do what Reb Nachman commanded at the very end of his life. "Jews!" he cried. "Gevalt! Never give in to despair! Seek out joy; seek beauty; seek goodness. And always, always, no matter how dark things may appear, you will find them."

So now I am struggling to create a new theme for my rabbinate: the search for *simcha*—celebration. My task now is something I never anticipated back in seminary: to make war on depression in myself and in others—to become an active seeker of joy.

I find joy primarily through three paths. First: *Simchat Olam*—taking delight in the physical pleasures of this world. Singing, dancing, tastes and textures, fragrance and color and light. To turn the fresh soil in a garden, to sit on the beach at sunset, to bite into a juicy

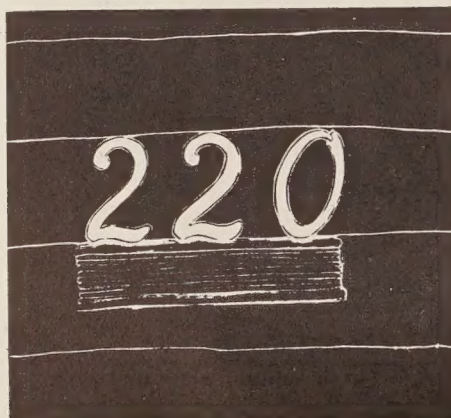
ripe peach, to kiss somebody you love: this is the fabric of *simchat Olam*. And when all I can see is ugliness in this world—purple blotches and emaciated young faces—then I think of Hal, a person with AIDS I know, who takes exquisite delight in the things of this world. I picture Hal playing with his puppy or tending his bonsai plants or teaching his houseful of birds to talk—and my anger starts to heal. Once again I can say, *Hineh tov me'od*—the things of this world are very good.

The second path I follow to joy is *simchat torah*—taking delight in the Torah, in my life as a Jew. The cadence of Hebrew prayer or Yiddish poem; the zest of sacred study; blast of shofar or flicker of candle—all these make up the fabric of *simchat torah*. And when I am disgusted with my tradition, when I see Jews who should know better using the Torah as a weapon against gay people, then I remember the face of David, another young man with AIDS, as he looked just yesterday—sitting up in his hospital bed, an IV in one arm, the tallit up over his head, davening with tears of joy in his eyes. I remember how much David loves the Torah, how much strength it gives him; I feel his tears in my eyes, and once again I say, *Hineh tov me'od*—it is wonderfully good to be a Jew.

My third path to joy is *simchat mitzva*—taking delight in doing a mitzva, a deed of loving concern. The hand stretched out to draw a stranger in, to comfort a frail old person in a nursing home, to shelter a Central American refugee—that is the fabric of *simchat mitzva*. And when I get bitter over what I read in the papers and say to myself, "The world's a cold and selfish place," then I think of Mark, a PWA who makes regular visits to elderly shut-ins in our congregation. I think of all the lovers I know who've triumphed over their own fear and cared tenderly for their life partners when illness struck them down. I think of the people with AIDS who tell me, "I never knew how much I was loved by my family and friends until I got sick." And once again, I'm able to say, *Hineh tov me'od*—it is so very good to belong to a mitzva community.

Simchat olam—delight in the pleasures of this world; *simchat torah*—delight in

Continued on page 9



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
| | | | 16 Sivan 1 | 17 2 | 18 3 Kabbalat Service, 6:15pm Late Service, 8:15pm Officer Installation | 19 4 |
| 20 5 Pt. Reyes Hike, 9:15am Kaiser Brunch, 10:30am | 21 6 | 22 7 Newsletter Comm., 7:30pm, 140 Ord | 23 8 | 24 9 Social Action Comm., 7:30pm | 25 10 Services, 8:15pm | 26 11 |
| 27 12 | 28 13 Va'ad Meeting, 6:30pm Newsletter Deadline | 29 14 | 30 15 | 1 Tammuz 16 Bikkur Cholim Comm., 7:30pm Life in Israel, 7:30pm | 2 17 Services, 8:15pm | 3 18 |
| 4 19 | 5 20 | 6 21 | 7 22 Membership Comm., 7:30pm, 731-9271 | 8 23 | 9 24 Freedom Shabbat Services, 8:15pm | 10 25 Morning Services, 10:30am |
| 11 26 Freedom Day Parade | 12 27 | 13 28 | 14 29 | 15 30 | | |

Ritual Calendar

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Friday, June 3
Parshah Be-Ha'alotcha
Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 6:15 pm
Tiela Chalmers and Steve Greenberg
Late Service, 8:15 pm
Installation of Officers
Rabbi Yoel Kahn & Leslie Bergson

Friday, June 10
Parshah Sehlah Lecha
Daniel Chesir
The Torah will be read.

Friday, June 17
Parshah Korach
Bill Schlichter

Friday, June 24
Shabbat Freedom
Parshah Chukkat
Rabbi Yoel Kahn & Dana Vinicoff

Saturday, June 25
Morning Service, 10:30 am
Rabbi Yoel Kahn & Bill Schlichter

Friday, June 1
Parshah Balak
Kabbalat Shabbat, 6:15 pm
Rabbi Yoel Kahn & Nancy Snow
Late Service, 8:15 pm
Rabbi Yoel Kahn & Jonathan Funk

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Anniversaries

- 1 Mark Vogel & Kenton Hoover
- 3 Wendy Oberlander & Lisa Odabashian
- 12 Irene Ogus & Rosalinda Del Moral
- 13 Yoel Kahn & Dan Bellm
- 19 Mercedes Laurencin & Laurie Hauer
- 24 Lyssa Friedman & Daphne Stuart
- 30 Alita Rosenfeld & Kate Sharp

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- Birthdays
- 3 David Hyman
- 4 Ora Prochovnick
- 5 Rick Crane
- 7 Ailsa Steckel
- 9 Allyce Kimerling
- 10 Daniel Chesir
- 13 Sunny Schwartz
- 16 Michael Freedland
- 18 Lawrence Millner
- 22 Margaret Rossoff
- 24 M. Paul Schwartz
- 26 Marc Lipschutz
- 26 Jonathan Mesinger
- 28 Lisa Katz
- 29 Jay Feinstein
- 30 Benjamin Blachman-Forshay

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Va'ad Report

President Richard Inlander called the Va'ad to order on Monday, May 9. In his *D'var Torah*, Rabbi Yoel Kahn suggested to those present that we reflect on why we were meeting, from a Jewish standpoint.

Treasurer Eric Keitel distributed the April financial statement, and highlighted some recent programs including Passover and Purim. He said that CSZ has nearly reached its budgeted dues goal, but that \$11,000 in pledged dues remain outstanding. He said a number of members have responded to his recent request by sending in their payments on the building assessment.

Richard read some letters of thanks for the Kaiser AIDS brunch program, for the use of CSZ's Torah at Camp Tawonga, and for our recent donation of \$7,000 to the San Francisco AIDS Foundation Food Bank from sales of the cookbook. He also reported that Sinai Memorial Chapel has made a grant of \$1,250 in support of CSZ's education programs.

Robin Leonard presented the proposal of the Publications Policy Committee, a committee of the Va'ad charged with developing a publications policy for the synagogue. The Va'ad thoroughly discussed the proposed policy, which will be brought to the Va'ad for a second reading after considering some modifications.

Don Albert proposed adding cushions to the pews in the sanctuary. The Va'ad indicated strong support for this concept, which will be considered by members of the Finance Committee and Fine Arts Committee and will be presented again to the Va'ad.

Tiela Chalmers reported on the formation of a long-term planning committee. Her motion that the Va'ad appoint such a committee was approved, but a decision to appoint members to the committee was delayed pending further work.

Betty Kalis outlined the results of her research on the question, "What is policy?" She suggested that we may be at the point where we need more formal statements of policies than when we were a small organization.

Social Action chair Ami Zusman reported on the recent event co-sponsored with Ahavat Shalom, which included presentations on gay, lesbian and bisexual life in Israel. Ami also reported that

Jonathan Mesinger will be succeeding her as chair of the Social Action Committee.

After such a long meeting, singing *Oseh Shalom* was indeed an accomplishment.

—Ben Schalit, Recorder

Contributions

Sha'ar Zahav welcomes all contributions, of all sizes, to mark any event, and to any of our funds. Contributions will be acknowledged in the *Forward* unless requested otherwise.

Donations were made to Sha'ar Zahav's funds in the past months by the following contributors:

General Fund

Allen Harris, in memory of Marilyn Riggs' father

Eric Keitel & Aaron Cooper, for Leila Raim's speedy recovery; in memory of Jack Vilschick; in honor of John Arnold's birthday; and in honor of Mark Mackler's & Ingu Yun's new house

Jon Funk, in appreciation of Alex Ingersoll's kindnesses and wishing a speedy recovery to Leila Raim

Betty Kalis & Marion Trentman, to wish Leila Raim a speedy recovery

Philip Charney

Steve Greenberg, in memory of Neil Stansky

Amy Blasenheim, in memory of Mirtha Beale

Prayerbook Fund

Mike Rankin, in honor of the Haggadah Committee; in honor of Shirley Liberman and her Seder Committee for their super ability to make a seder everything it should be

Howard Blechman, in honor of his mother Zelda's 70th birthday

AIDS Fund

Robert E. Lee, in appreciation and admiration of Nurse Ann

Dr. Martin & Sonia Bordo, in honor of their family for being together for the seder

Hal Podgur, in memory of "Dutchie" Zucker

Henry Mach, in appreciation of the work of our Haggadah Committee.

Building Fund

Allen Harris, in honor of the birth of his niece, Alyson Lee Yanofsky

Torah Fund

Peter Vishniac, in memory of his loving parents, Easabel & Ruby

Lawrence Millner, in memory of his parents, Sadye and Joseph Millner

Lana Sokoro, in memory of Cheryl Orvis

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Ruth Friedman, in memory of Aron Friedman

Sharon Kleinbaum

Jerome Higgs & Sanford Friedman

George Ash, in honor of the blessing of his mother Freda Ash's 81 years in good health

Thomas Yazman, in memory of "Dutchie" Zucker, mother of Naomi Lempert

Hal Podgur, in appreciation of Paul Cohen and Don Albert

Education Fund

Paul Cohen, in honor of a special birthday of Benjamin Gold

A Goodbye Wish from Your Treasurer

This month marks the last month of my term as treasurer of the congregation. I would like to thank all those members who have promptly sent in their dues payments and annual building donations. We will be in very capable hands when Ben Schalit takes over the duties of the treasurer. Since I would like to turn the books over to him in as complete a fashion as possible, I'd like to ask each of our members who has outstanding dues for the 1987-88 year to please send in the remainder of their dues payments no later than June 15. If you have not paid your building donation for the year (\$30 per adult wage earner), please send that in as well. (Please make two separate checks for dues and building donation, as this makes bookkeeping much easier.) As our congregation continues to grow, the work load of our treasurer increases. Please try to cooperate by sending in your pledges on time. Thanks again for the opportunity of serving you this year.

—Eric Keitel

Help for Travelers

Making a trip this summer? Wondering where you might be able to meet other gay and lesbian Jews or attend services while you are out of town? From the newsletter of the World Congress of Gay & Lesbian Jewish Organizations, here is a list of the names and addresses of the member groups. We have included phone numbers where known; contact the organization directly for exact scheduling of events.

Adath Rayoot
c/o Gay Comm. Ctr.
P.O. Box 74
Baltimore, MD 21203

Agudah (Society for the Protection of
Personal Rights)
P.O. Box 16151
61161 Tel Aviv
Israel

Ahavat Tzion
2300 G St. #3
Sacramento, CA 95816

Am Tikva
P.O. Box 11
Cambridge, MA 02238

Aytz Chayim
5800 Lumberdale Rd. #2
Houston, TX 77092

Bet Haverim
P.O. Box 54947
Atlanta, GA 30308
(404) 642-3467

Bet Mishpachah
P.O. Box 1410
Washington, DC 20013
(202) 833-1638

Beth El Binah
P.O. Box 64460
Dallas, TX 75206

Beth Chai
P.O. Box 451
Farmingdale, NY 11735

Beth Chayim Chadashim
6000 W. Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90035
(213) 931-7023

Beth Simchat Torah
P.O. Box 1270 GPO
New York, NY 10116
(212) 929-9498

Beyt G'vurah
P.O. Box 8503
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Chevrei Tikva
P.O. Box 18120
Cleveland, OH 44118
(216) 932-5551

Jewish Gay Group
BM J99
London WC 1N 3XX
England

Metropolitan Comm. Synagogue
19094 W. Dixie Hwy.
N. Miami Beach, FL 33180
(305) 931-9318

Mishpachat Am
P.O. Box 39127
Phoenix, AZ 85069

Naches
P.O. Box 298, Station H
Montreal, Quebec
Canada H3G 2K8

Or Chadash
c/o 2nd Unitarian Church
656 W. Barry
Chicago, IL 60657
(312) 248-9456

Stichting Sjalhomo
P.O. Box 2536
1000 CM Amsterdam
Holland

Tikvah Chadashah
P.O. Box 2731
Seattle, WA 98111
(206) 329-2590

Tikvat Shalom
P.O. Box 441
Littleton, CO 80160

Yachad
P.O. Box 4784
San Diego, CA 92104

Kaiser Brunch Thank-You

Dear Friends,

As an AIDS patient at Kaiser Hospital I attended your brunch at the end of April. What a wonderful and joyous occasion it was. Everyone was so warm and friendly and supportive—it just lifted my spirits way up. And the food—wow! All the cooks deserve congratulations.

Thank you so much for doing this for all of us. It is a wonderful kind of gesture that means a great deal.

—Kaiser Brunch Attendee

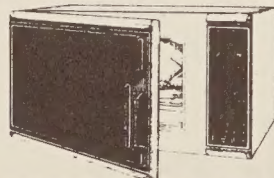
A Note of Appreciation

I would like to extend my thanks to the members of the congregation who, during the recent illness and death of my son, Lawrence, were so supportive and sympathetic; especially dear friends Jeffrey, Rosalinda, Irene, Michael and Steve. We must not relent in our fight against AIDS.

—Ken Burke

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So Ask Aunt Yente

Dear Aunt Yente,

Can you settle an argument? My friend insists that the book of Esther is in the Torah, but I was taught that the Torah ended with the death of Moses. Who is right?

Hesitant on Hidalgo

Dear Hesitant,

Well, sometimes Moses. And sometimes Esther. And always, of course, your Aunt Yente.

Between you and your friend, if that's what you're asking, you are both right. You are simply a little *famished* between Torah, on the one hand, and Torah, on the other. Then there is also Torah, and of course Torah. So let Aunt Yente give you a scorecard.

In almost every synagogue is at least one Torah. On a parchment scroll a *sofer*, a scribe, has handwritten with ink from plants the five books of Moses, from *B'reishis*, Genesis, to the end of *D'vorim*, Deuteronomy (and you thought Yiddish was hard to spell.) As an Ashkenazi synagogue, we keep the scroll in a velvet mantel, and we unroll it on a table to read. Sephardic *shuls* keep the Torah upright in a hinged, embossed case, and open it to read. (Only the *very* reform use the cd's.) To use in *shul*, the Torah has to be perfect; not a single letter anywhere in the scroll can be damaged or missing. (Aunt Yente has the same attitude toward her column, but she cannot get the *Forward* to agree that it should be handwritten each month by the *sofer* of her choice.)

The Torah is the holiest object we have, and it is interesting to Aunt Yente that the objects that matter most to Jews are things with words. Not that you would use a shofer as a Jello mold (and

don't send Aunt Yente any recipes!); but the objects that we really have rules about, and treat with special respect, are the scrolls, and the books, and the other things with writing. (This is maybe because Moses used to moonlight as a librarian, until he got fired because whenever books were overdue, *nebbech* a plague would break out.)

So just as Torah can mean the scroll, it can also mean the five books written in it. This is why we sometimes call the Bible "*TaNaCh*," an acronym for *Torah*, *N'viyim*, and *C'suvim*—*Torah* (the first five books), *N'viyim* (prophets, like Joshua or Isaiah) and *C'suvim* (writings, like Song of Songs or Ruth). By this logic, so Esther is in the *C'suvim*, and not *Torah* proper.

But on the other hand, you certainly could also say that the *N'viyim* and *C'suvim* are also part of the Torah. At Sinai, we received the entire Torah, including the story of the death of Moses (which wasn't very polite, since he was standing right there), as well as the much later stories of Ruth and Esther. In that sense, the Torah is simply the Bible. When you use the word Torah like this, the five books of Moses you would call the *Chumash* (which means "the five").

But wait; things aren't half confusing enough yet. Because it is also said that at Sinai, Moses received both the "*Torah sheb'ksav*" (the written Torah) and the "*Torah sheb'al peh*" (the oral Torah). The written Torah is the Bible; the oral Torah includes the Talmud. (Oral? All sixty-odd volumes of the Talmud? (And some are very odd.) Well, the Talmud used to be oral, because we were afraid that if we wrote it down it would become as im-

portant as the Torah, but then we did and it did but now it's too late.) So the Talmud also is part of the Torah.

(You shouldn't confuse the Talmud or the Torah with Talmud Torah, which means the study of Torah or a Torah school. But this you didn't ask Aunt Yente, so she won't mention it.)

So you think Aunt Yente is finished? So let her tell you that she hasn't even begun to talk about what the Torah really is. The biggest hint came from Moses (and who should know better): "So it is not in heaven, so you shouldn't ask, *nebbech*, 'Who is going up to heaven they should get it for us?' And it is not over the sea, so you can't ask, 'Who will go cross the sea and get it for us?' *Nu*, it is very near you, in your mouths and in your hearts, so you *takke* can do it." (Moses didn't really talk like this, but Aunt Yente thought she would make his grammar nicer.) What we can learn from each other, and what each of us can learn from Upstairs; all the questions we ask and the answers we try to find: all this is also Torah, the Torah that Moses said is in our mouths and in our hearts. So not only are Moses and Ruth in the Torah, but you and your friend and the question between you are part of the Torah; and who knows? Maybe the Torah even has room for one or two columns from someone like

—Aunt Yente

Aunt Yente loves to receive your questions about Jewish law and ritual matters, and tries to answer as many as she can in her column (but a guarantee she doesn't make.) Just write her c/o the Forward, 220 Danvers Street., San Francisco, CA 94114. All material © 1988 Congregation Sha'ar Zahav.

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Point Reyes Hike

Come and join us for a congregational hike on Sunday, June 5 at Point Reyes National Seashore. We will assemble in front of the synagogue at 9:15 am, form carpools and start the hike beginning at the Sky Trail head at 10:30, going for six to seven moderately easy miles.

Bring along your lunch and water bottle. Black tie is optional, but sensible (comfortable) shoes are required! Questions? Call Allen Brandstein at 285-3577.

Yahrzeits

- 1 Abraham Vogel, father of Lee Vogel
- 1 Annie Goldberg, grandmother of Carol Cohen
- 2 Mark Feldman, member of the congregation
- 2 Margaret Staub, grandmother of Wendy Weiss
- 3 (Sivan 18) Fivel Rudman, grandfather of Rick Crane
- 4 J.P. Leake, grandfather of Paul Quin
- 4 Claude Wybrecht, lover of Ralph Vissell
- 5 Claire Israels, mother of David Israels
- 6 (Sivan 21) Anna Handman, grandmother of Jonathan Schwartz
- 8 Leo Harris, grandfather of Allen Harris
- 9 Duff Kreitzberg, member of the congregation
- 9 Herman H. Siegel, father of Barry Siegel
- 12 (Sivan 27) Perel Berenstein, grandmother of Allan Berenstein
- 13 Arthur Felson, friend of Michael Bettinger
- 14 Mirtha Beal, member of the congregation
- 14 (Sivan 29) John Blazewick, father of Joan Blazewick
- 16 Leslie Kravitz, father of Bob Kravitz
- 16 (Tammuz 1) Sarah Neibert, grandmother of Sanford Friedman
- 17 Simma Guilford, mother of Andrea Piazza
- 17 Joseph Millner, father of Lawrence Millner
- 17 Joe Zygielbaum, member of the congregation
- 19 Sandy Wolin, friend of Robin Leonard
- 20 Irving Wildberg, grandfather of Judy Macks
- 20 Henriette Wildberg, grandmother of Judy Macks
- 21 Leo Leva, friend of Keith Barton
- 22 David B. Goodstein, friend of Bernard Pechter
- 22 Dorothy Abraham Weiss, stepmother of Wendy Weiss
- 23 Sidney Hannaford, father of Stephanie Hannaford
- 23 Manuel Tanovitz, father of Ed Tanovitz

- 23 Sarah Cinnamon, grandmother of Jeff Presement
- 23 Sidney S. Steckel, father of Ailsa Steckel
- 24 Pearl Lindsey, aunt of Bill Schlichter
- 25 Pauline Lillian Weill, grandmother of Jill Rose
- 25 (Tammuz 10) Hyman Witt, father of Sue Witt
- 26 Leo Miller, father of Marilyn Miller
- 26 Allan Levy, friend of Pamela Singer
- 28 (Tammuz 13) Charles Crane, father of Rick Crane
- 29 Morris Pies, father of Cheri Pies
- 30 Thomas Tannenhau, cousin of Bruce Katz
- 30 Nathan Gross, grandfather of Roger Gross

New Members

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that our congregation gained several new members in May. A warm welcome to the latest people to join our family:

Andy Rose & Bruce Priebe
Susan Stahl
Jeff Weil, Andy & Laura
Rick Wilson

New members are welcomed and honored at Friday night services on the last Friday of the month. By making them feel a part of our family, we can all help to show our new members that they have a valuable place at Sha'ar Zahav.

Strudel

(Continued from page 4)


my Jewishness; *simchat mitzva*—delight in doing deeds of loving concern. Three paths to joy; three paths of regeneration; three paths that save me from the black hole of depression. I try to share them with my congregation as best I can. I try to teach them, *Ivdu et Adonai be-simcha*—Even now, in this time, in this place, we can serve God with gladness, come into God's presence with singing.

A closing story: Max Lipkis, 96 years old, is lying on his deathbed. The whole family has flown in to be with him at the end. Max is lying in a daze, seemingly oblivious to everything. Suddenly, however, he opens his eyes and lets out a sound—a little croak. "Max?" says his wife, Sadie. "Max? Did you say something?" Max whispers something. Sadie bends over the bed. "What? What was that you said?" "Strudel," he rasps. "Hunh?" Max gathers all his strength and finally manages to speak. "Sadie," he says, "From the kitchen—I smell something baking. It's your wonderful apple strudel. Sadie—I ask you: could you bring me one last piece of strudel?" Sadie sighs. "Max, I'm so sorry, she says. "That's for after the funeral."

The story says it all. Taste the strudel now, it says. Not *acharei mot*. Not after the funeral. Taste the sweetness of life, seek out the beauty of life, now—while you still can. Or, as a sign in the window of a little toy shop on Melrose puts it most eloquently, "Don't postpone joy."

—Rabbi Janet Marder

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Tiela Chalmers
Jay Feinstein
Robert Goldware
Betty Kalis
Garry Koenigsberg
Ellen Kugler
Robin Leonard
Alita Rosenfeld
Susan Talley

Services are held every Friday evening beginning at 8:15 pm (except as noted), with an Oneg Shabbat following services. Services are generally held on the last Saturday of each month at 10:30 am — check calendar for each month.

Committee Chairs:

Bikkur Cholim, Paul Cohen
Brotherhood, by committee
Building, David Gellman
Bylaws, Richard Inlander
Family/Children's Havurah, Sue Douglass & Jill Rose
Education, Bill Goldstein
Finance, Don Albert
Membership, Merry Luskin
Newsletter, by committee
Oneg, Bill Ashley-Dobbin
Past Presidents Council, Daniel Chesir
Public Relations, Sharyn Saslafsky & Andy Zimmerman
Ritual, Steve Greenberg
Social Action, Ami Zusman
Social Program, by committee
Women's Havurah, Ann Biderman

Data Managers:

Alita Rosenfeld
Jerry Rosenstein

Office Managers:

Jenny Helbraun
Jacqueline Letalien

Office Hours: M, 9:30–5; Tu, Th, F, 9:30–2; W, 9:30–6.

Emergency Number: In an emergency, the Congregation can be contacted outside of office hours by calling 420-9718.

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav (Congregation of the Golden Gate) is located in the Upper Market District of San Francisco at 220 Danvers at Caselli, which is one block south of the intersection of 18th & Market streets. By public transport, take MUNI bus 33 Stanyan to 18th & Danvers and walk one block south on Danvers to Caselli.

Member Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Mike Rankin, Liaison) and World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations (Ora Prochovnick, Liaison).

Planning Committee Seeks Members

A new long-range planning committee is currently being formed. This committee will develop long-range planning models and processes, and facilitate discussion and decision-making on the larger policy issues that face us in the next 10 to 20 years. The committee will be of limited size; members will be appointed by the Va'ad, and participation will require at least a one-year time commitment. We are particularly interested in hearing from newer members of the congregation, but all interested members are encouraged to apply. Please call Daniel Chesir at 645-3112 (w) or 863-6615 (h), or Tiela Chalmers at 954-4471 (w) or 863-9958 (h), by Friday, June 10.

MEMBERSHIP

feels good

Naches

Mazel tov to **Dana Lear** on the birth of her son, Max Gordon Lear, on April 9.

Congratulations to **Steve Cronenwalt** on his job promotion. We hope he will come back to visit from his new home in Denver.

Mazel tov to **Alita Rosenfeld & Kate Sharp** on the purchase of their home in Berkeley.

Classified Ads

HOUSESITTER NEEDED: month of July. Nice house on sunny, quiet Potrero Hill. Need plants watered, messages forwarded. Richard Wilson, 647-3258.

OFFICE SPACE—CIVIC CENTER: 1 or 2 penthouse view offices. Attorneys, accountants, other professionals. Conference room, library, copier, phone. Separate secretarial space with each office. Paul Wotman—864-1900.

Summer Reminder

The *Forward* crew will be taking a month off this summer, publishing a combined July/August issue. So if you are planning a July or August event and want to make sure it appears in the newsletter, please note that the deadline for all summer articles will be June 13.

Office Notes

The staff will be on vacation at various times during the month of June, and we may be open fewer hours as a consequence. If you call the synagogue, either a human or a recording will let you know our hours.

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